DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY KAZAKHSTAN

Students of Concern Policy

In effect from the beginning of the Academic Year 2026/27.



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1 Introduction

1.1 The University welcomes a diverse student body and seeks to ensure that all students have the opportunity to study, achieve and enjoy University life to the best of their ability, in a safe and supportive environment which allows for academic and personal development.

1.2 The University has a commitment to student experience and offers a range of student services and support to help students reach their potential while at the University. Whilst students are responsible for managing their own well-being, the University aims to work collaboratively with and support students.

1.3 The University acknowledges that an individual may demonstrate behaviours that cause concerns for their own wellbeing, or the wider wellbeing of the University community. Such behaviours may be attributed to, for example, medical conditions including communicable diseases, mental illnesses, taking (or failing to take) prescribed medication or chronic health conditions. In these circumstances, the University recognises that a student may benefit from the University's direct intervention and support. Students must provide accurate information about themselves (medical reports, references for any health issues) to the Students Development Services so that the University is ready to assist when needed.

1.4 The university has the right to report all concerns about the students to their Legal representatives.

1.5 This process is intended to provide a framework to help the Student of concern while mitigating risk to the Student, the wider University community and the public. While the University will adopt a non-judgmental, consistent, sensitive, and coordinated approach to managing a situation, the University reserves the right to invoke, where appropriate, procedures, including in cases where behaviour that causes concern contravenes other policies and laws.

1.6 The existence of medical conditions or other disabilities does not absolve Students from the responsibility for their education or their responsibility towards other members of the University community.

1.7 Consideration will be given, if it seems helpful, as part of this process to engage emergency contacts. This would ordinarily be with the students' consent, but in exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to engaging them anyway (police, ambulance, etc.).)

2 Scope

2.1 The policy applies to any enrolled student at the University, including foundation, undergraduate, post-graduate taught and postgraduate students.

2.2 The policy is intended for use in cases: where the disruption or risk to the student, other students, staff or the University community as a whole, as a result of a student's behaviour or circumstances, is considered to be so acute that a welfare service(s) business as usual arrangements may not mitigate the risk.

2.3 The policy is not intended to address a student's general support requirements, as established student welfare support arrangements exist for this purpose. Students accessing sources of welfare support will not, in itself, be considered a cause for concern.

2.4 Staff members should recognise that most welfare concerns will fall below the Level 1 threshold, and staff members (Academic and Professional Services) should make all reasonable efforts to provide appropriate academic and pastoral support/sign-posting and to engage students in the provision of that support.

2.5 This policy is not intended as a way of responding to crises. In cases of emergency situations, e.g. immediate risk of serious self-harm, suicide, or harm to others, staff must always ring the police 102, ambulance 103, or the emergency agency 112.

3 Applying the six principles of safeguarding

3.1 The six principles of Safeguarding will be at the heart of the operation of this procedure, as follows:

3.2 Prevention – this policy should be understood as being about preventing unwanted outcomes, such as a student not achieving their academic potential, or experiencing harm/harming the wider university community. It should therefore, whenever possible, be enacted at an early stage, rather than being seen as a 'last resort'.

3.3 Partnership – in order for this policy to achieve its aims, it will be necessary for both students and the university to work together to devise plans which have a chance of succeeding. The student's views should always form a central part of decision-making.

3.4 Empowerment – the aim of this policy will be to assist the student to identify and access resources and support which put them in the best position to develop as an independent learner.

3.5 Proportionality – students, as with any other member of society, have the right to make choices which others may not perceive to be in their best interests. The purpose of this policy is not to interfere with those choices, and it should be enacted only when there are serious concerns. Escalation through the three stages should also be carefully considered.

3.6 Protection – the University is committed to providing support and protection to those in the greatest need, and wherever possible, the exercise of this policy should be about trying to ensure students with the most difficult circumstances are afforded that protection.

3.7 Accountability – plans which are made as part of this process will involve commitments from both the university and students, and on both sides, there will be an expectation that reasonable efforts are made to keep those commitments.

3.8 The process has three stages based on the degree of concern and/or the perceived seriousness of the situation. The Process set out in Chapter 3 can be initiated only by the Students at Risk Committee, and is not necessarily sequential.

4 Level 1: Emerging and low-level concerns

4.1 This stage of the process is informal and is concerned primarily with prevention and protection, usually when a concern has been raised through the Students at Risk process, which indicates that a student's ability or other students' ability to progress is being significantly impaired.

4.2 The concerns are deemed to fall within a welfare service(s) “business as usual”. For this process, business as usual would be defined as a student whose complexity and needs cannot be met by the student welfare services' usual input and therefore may not mitigate the risk(s) presented and is impacting significantly on the wider University community. In the vast majority of cases, there will be no need to escalate beyond this stage. This stage might be considered as a ‘near miss' by Ofsted.

4.3 A student chooses to engage with the appropriate welfare service(s) and/or security, and an appropriate support plan is put in place.

4.4 All student well-being services at the University are committed to the six principles of Safeguarding, and in particular will seek to agree plans in partnership with students, which empower them to succeed in their education.

4.5 If the student does not engage at this level and /or there is continued risk of non-engagement and /or concern of a student’s activities which is beyond a welfare service(s) business as usual (see 4.2), the principle of partnership remains important and this should wherever possible be discussed with the student, and a joint decision reached on a productive way forward.

4.6 A service may escalate the student to Level 2, but should only do so when it is proportionate to do so, for example, because the principles of protection or prevention cannot be achieved without that escalation occurring: Enhanced Concerns.

5 Level 2: Enhanced Concerns

5.1 Where there is an enhanced concern, or a pattern of behaviour which goes beyond a welfare service(s) and/or security’s business as usual and/or continues to impede a student’s ability or other students’ ability to progress.

5.2 A service notifies the Student at Risk Committee of a student about whom they have Enhanced Concerns. The Committee considers whether, with the six principles of safeguarding in mind, an escalation would be proportionate to the situation, and, where appropriate, ratifies the escalation and confirms the lead service for the Enhanced Concern.

5.3 The lead service invites the student to a meeting to work in partnership to co-create a support plan. A Student can be accompanied by a companion.

5.4 Prior to the meeting, the lead service will collate and document information from relevant colleagues (across Professional Services and Faculty) on a support plan to ensure a whole-individual approach. Any written submissions by the student will also be considered at this stage.

5.5 At the outset of the meeting, the purpose of the meeting should be explained, in particular emphasising that the intention is to work in partnership to find a way to empower the student to succeed in their studies, and prevent, as far as possible, negative outcomes occurring.

5.6 Documentation which will be used to develop the plan will be shared with the student, and wherever possible, the student will be empowered to consider what approaches are most likely to be effective for them, including suggestions about what the university could do to most effectively provide protection to the student.

5.7 The principle of accountability will be discussed, and it applies equally to the university and the student.

5.8 Wherever possible, a jointly agreed plan will be made, and an agreement made about an appropriate period of time to review the plan, and what either party should do if they have further concerns in the interim.

5.9 If the Enhanced Concern Plan does not sufficiently improve the situation, or the student has not engaged, a service may escalate the student to Level 3: Serious Concerns. Wherever possible, this should be discussed with the student in advance and explained as a supportive measure.

6 Level 3: Serious Concerns

6.1 Where there is a serious concern, or a pattern of behaviour which goes beyond a welfare service(s) and/or security's business as usual and/or continues to impede a student's ability or other students' ability to progress.

6.2 A welfare service notifies the Student Development Services of a student about whom they have serious concerns. The Committee ratifies the escalation and confirms the lead service for the Serious Concern.

6.3 The lead service informs the student that they must attend a meeting to co-create a support plan. A student can be accompanied by a companion.

6.4 Prior to the meeting, the lead service will collate and document information from relevant colleagues (across Professional Services and Faculty) on the Enhanced Concern Plan to ensure a whole-individual approach. Any written submissions by the student will also be considered at this stage.

6.5 Should a student not engage with the appropriate service and attend the meeting, contact will be made with the student to ascertain their safety and rationale for non-attendance.

6.6 If the student fails to engage at this level, it does not show progress against the Enhanced Concern Plan and/or there is continued risk, a service may refer the student to the Student Development team. Examples of referral outcomes may include: further support, a leave of absence, behaviour dealt with through disciplinary action, or a recommendation made to the Academic Director.

7 The Student at Risk Committee

7.1 The Student at Risk committee maintains an overview of serious concerns which have been raised in relation to students, and will act as a source of advice and overview of the operation of the student concern procedure, in particular it will; uphold the processes outlined within this chapter; determine lead service for complex cases support welfare service(s) and/or security in coordinating approaches to a Student facing enhanced (Level 2) and serious (Level 3) concern that impact on their or others ability to progress academically; escalate the Student Development Services should the Student of Concern process be exhausted.

Exceptional Interventions

7.2 When a student exhibits behaviour that puts themselves or others at immediate risk, a temporary suspension from campus or specified areas may be imposed by the student Development Services, or a practice suspension may be imposed for programmes that require students to undertake professional placements.

7.3 The Suspension shall normally be reviewed every 4 weeks (or earlier if new evidence becomes available, or it is appropriate to do so) by the Student Development Services who may confirm, revoke, or vary the suspension in the light of any developments or of any representations made by the student or anyone on their behalf.

8 Non-Engagement

8.1 The purpose of this procedure is to work in partnership with students to find ways of supporting progress in their education, whilst providing adequate protection to them and other members of the university community.

8.2 Whilst the procedure is not intended to be in any way punitive, there are circumstances where, if a student does not engage in this procedure, it may not be possible for them to safely continue their studies.

8.3 Where it is proportionate to the situation, this may result in the student being escalated to the Student Development Services for a final decision on the student's status at the University. Examples of outcomes include: further support, a leave of absence, behaviour dealt with through disciplinary action, or a recommendation to the senior management that the student is permanently excluded from the University.

9 Support

9.1 Examples of sources of support a student can access include:

- The University's student well-being
- External organisations and charities
- Mandatory Medical treatment

10 Return to study

10.1 Following a period of absence from the University, it may be appropriate for the student to return to resume studies and return to the University. If this is the case, it will be necessary to ensure that the student is supported by their Faculty and/or Programme Lead (with advice from welfare services.

10.2 Other members of staff within Student Development Services will be available to provide advice and support, as appropriate, to facilitate the student's transition back onto the course. This will be arranged by the faculty, with the direct involvement of or in consultation with Student Development Services.

11 A student's right of appeal

11.1 The student has the right to appeal against decisions made as part of this process. The student can appeal in writing to the Student Development Services, within 10 working days of being sent details of the outcomes of any stage of this process.

11.2 The grounds for appeal are:

- There is new and relevant evidence which the student was demonstrably and for the most exceptional reasons unable to present at the panel hearing. This may include evidence of extenuation.
- That the panel did not comply with its procedures, as set out above, in such a way that it might cause reasonable doubt as to whether the result would have been different had the panel complied.
- that there is evidence of prejudice or bias

11.3 Senior Management Team may dismiss an appeal at this stage if, in their absolute opinion, it appears that the grounds of appeal are so lacking in substance that further consideration would not be justified.

11.4 Student Development Services should convene the Appeals Panel and arrange for the appeal to be heard if they feel there is substance to do so. The Appeals Panel shall comprise the Senior Management Team.

11.5 The student will be given notice in writing of the hearing and the members of the Appeals Panel due notice will be deemed to have been given if the notice and supporting information was securely using an encrypted and password protected document to the students University email and any personal email addresses provided by the student, no less than 10 working days before the date of the hearing.

11.6 If the student does not attend the hearing, without a reasonable explanation, as determined by the Senior Management Team, the appeal shall be considered to have lapsed.

11.7 If the student, on good grounds, wishes to object to any member of the Appeals Committee, the student shall submit their objections in writing to be received by the Student Development Services at least 5 University working days before the hearing. If the grounds for objection are upheld, an alternative member of the Panel will be identified.

11.8 The student has the right to appear and be heard and to be accompanied by a representative.

11.9 The Appeals Panel may set aside, vary or confirm the decisions made as part of the student concern process.

11.10 The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and not subject to review by any other University body.

11.11 The Appeals Panel shall inform the student, Student Development Services and relevant Academic Departments of its decision.

12 Document and version control information

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